

Message

From: Geertsma, Meleah [mgeertsma@nrdc.org]
Sent: 2/12/2019 8:53:35 PM
To: Marceillars, Rochelle [Marceillars.Rochelle@epa.gov]
Subject: RE: Water issues in East St. Louis area

Hi Rochelle –

Thanks again for the below info. I'd be very interested in your list of East St. Louis contacts; on a quick skim of emails, I don't think you've sent it along. And also very interested to hear about the workgroup discussion and whether you were able to follow-up with Chris (he's generally shared that there is an IEPA investigation of the town of Centreville's failure to have an MS4 permit for its separate sewer system, but that there are not any actions over issues with the combined parts of the sewer – we're supposed to speak with his sewer guy after he returns from vacation tomorrow).

I'm pretty full up between now and COB tomorrow, then am out until next Tuesday. Let me know if we should find a time to talk after that.

Best,
Meleah

MELEAH GEERTSMA
*Midwest Director, Health Equity and Water
Senior Attorney*

NATURAL RESOURCES
DEFENSE COUNCIL
20 N. WACKER DRIVE, SUITE 1600
CHICAGO, IL 60606
T 312.651.7904
F 312.332.1908
mgeertsma@NRDC.ORG
NRDC.ORG

Please save paper.
Think before printing.

From: Marceillars, Rochelle <Marceillars.Rochelle@epa.gov>
Sent: Thursday, January 31, 2019 10:49 AM
To: Geertsma, Meleah <mgeertsma@nrdc.org>
Cc: Walts, Alan <walts.alan@epa.gov>; Jencius, Michele <jencius.michele@epa.gov>
Subject: RE: Water issues in East St. Louis area

Hi Meleah,

Thank you. I concur with Alan, it's definitely good to be back to work. See my response below.

Btw, did I send you the list of contacts in East St. Louis per our last conversation? It's been awhile. Thanks.

*Rochelle A. Marceillars
Community Lead, City of East St. Louis
Air and Radiation Division, U.S. EPA Region 5
(312) 353-4370
(312) 385-5487 (fax)
marceillars.rochelle@epa.gov*

From: Walts, Alan
Sent: Thursday, January 31, 2019 9:09 AM
To: Geertsma, Meleah <mgeertsma@nrdc.org>
Cc: Marceillars, Rochelle <Marceillars.Rochelle@epa.gov>
Subject: Re: Water issues in East St. Louis area

Hi Meleah - Thanks, it's good to be back though there is definitely a lot of catching up to do. I will look for someone expert in the urban waters program. Encourage joining one of the availability calls in Feb as well. Listed here: <https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/environmental-justice-small-grants-program>

Best,
Alan

On Jan 31, 2019, at 8:37 AM, Geertsma, Meleah <mgeertsma@nrdc.org> wrote:

Hi Alan and Rochelle -

I hope you two are both staying warm and adjusting to being back at work! I know we're happy to have the agency open again, though I can imagine that there's a big backlog.

I'm circling back around on this thread for two reasons:

1. **Sewage.** It appears that there may be an IEPA investigation of the local sewer utility that's of concern to the residents; I'm trying to get more info from Chris Pressnall and his wastewater point (the latter is out on vacation until mid-Feb, but I'm hoping to connect with Chris before then to hear what additional info he has). If this is the case, would it make sense to bring in your folks as well?

Yes. Chris Pressnall is partnering with EPA and attended the first initial meetings scheduled with the City, medical field and a variety of organizations about a year ago to discuss health and environmental issues/concerns. This is where we learned about their sewage issue. I participate on an EJ workgroup comprised of staff within the other program offices in Region 5 (water, superfund, etc). Since East St. Louis is the community I work with, I will definitely reach out to the water contact on the workgroup. In fact, the workgroup meets every two weeks and our first meeting since we have returned is tomorrow. I also have a call tomorrow with the City's Director of Community and Economic Development that Chris will be on. After the call, I will let him know I would like to discuss their investigation and any updates he can provide.

2. **EJ Small Grants program.** The question has arisen whether some project for this community might be a good fit with EPA's EJ small grants program (which I see has a new application deadline of March 8). I'm not super-familiar with the program or the new urban water focus, so am wondering if there's someone at EPA who could answer some questions and help us think about a good project proposal?

Alan provided the information on this. FYI... I did submit the announcement to the City and community organizations in East St. Louis.

Best,

Meleah

From: Walts, Alan <walts.alan@epa.gov>
Sent: Friday, December 7, 2018 11:33:10 AM
To: Geertsma, Meleah
Cc: Marceillars, Rochelle
Subject: RE: Water issues in East St. Louis area

Meleah – I'm copying Rochelle, who is leading an Air program community-based effort in East St. Louis. She has heard some of these same concerns and can also give you more context about EPA's ongoing work in the area.

Here's some info, hope this helps:

1. Sauget Superfund Site: the Remedial Project Manager is Stephanie Linebaugh, (312) 353-2315, linebaugh.stephanie@epa.gov. She's probably the best place to start.
2. CSO: Our Water program tells me Illinois EPA has the lead in this community & EPA isn't involved in CSO work there. State contact (in permitting program) is Amy Dragovich: Amy.dragovich@illinois.gov
3. Drinking water: The main concern we've heard is about possible lead in drinking water and how to get that tested. Based on the most recent Consumer Confidence Report for ESL (<http://www.amwater.com/ccr/esl.pdf>), the utility started a lead service line replacement initiative in 2017; and testing (to comply with the Lead and Copper Rule) shows lead is being detected in the system. For advice on the various options residents may have to address this concern, or on other concerns related to drinking water, I recommend talking to Miguel Del Toral at deltoral.miguel@epa.gov or (312) 886-5253.

Best,
Alan

Director, Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance (OECA)
U.S. EPA, Region 5
Phone: (312) 353-8894

From: Geertsma, Meleah <mgeertsma@nrdc.org>
Sent: Tuesday, December 04, 2018 1:57 PM
To: Walts, Alan <walts.alan@epa.gov>
Subject: Re: Water issues in East St. Louis area

Thanks for the quick response, Alan - it probably goes without saying given the demographics of the East St. Louis metro area as a whole, but the impacted residents are low-income African American homeowners. And the impacts sound horrendous. Anything you can do to help appreciated. Noting, too, that there's concern over potential water impacts from the nearby Sauget Superfund site, so that program may be relevant as well.

Best,

Meleah

From: Walts, Alan <walts.alan@epa.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, December 4, 2018 1:34:13 PM
To: Geertsma, Meleah
Subject: Re: Water issues in East St. Louis area

Hi Meleah - thanks for reaching out. I hadn't heard about this but will check with our programs and get you connected with the right folks.

Best,
Alan

On Dec 4, 2018, at 1:26 PM, Geertsma, Meleah <mgeertsma@nrdc.org> wrote:

Hi Alan -

I hope this note finds you well; I'm reaching out because I was recently contacted about some horrible chronic sewage, flooding, and possibly connected drinking water issues in the East St. Louis area. I'm wondering whether R5 has heard about and/or looked into these issues in that geography, and either way if you could connect me with the right folks internally.

Best,

Meleah